

LOUISIANA'S ALLIGATOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT



presented to

**HOUSE AND SENATE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEES**

Prepared by
The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries,
Office of Wildlife, Fur and Refuge Division
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Introduction

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Department) manages the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) as a commercial, renewable natural resource. The Department's sustained use program is one of the world's most recognizable examples of a wildlife conservation success story. Louisiana's program has been used as a model for managing various crocodilian species throughout the world. Since the inception of the Department's program in 1972, over 730,000 wild alligators have been harvested, over 5.5 million alligator eggs have been collected, and over 2.9 million farm raised alligators have been sold bringing in millions of dollars of revenue to landowners, trappers and farmers. Conservative estimates have valued these resources at over \$552,000,000, providing significant, direct economic benefit to Louisiana.

This report, per R.S. 56:279 (E), provides an historical perspective; outlines the basis and philosophy of the Department's management program; reviews the federal government's oversight and approval role for management of the alligator in the United States; discusses wild, farm and nuisance alligator programs; lists research activities; and reviews the revenue and expenditure information associated with the management program and the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund. A separate report, furnished by the Department, details the activities and expenditures of the Fur and Alligator Advisory Council.

Historical Perspective

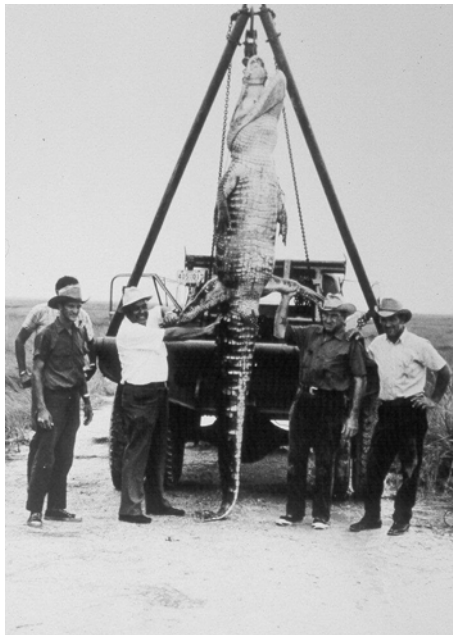
Alligators have been used commercially for their valuable leather since the 1800s. This harvest was generally unregulated throughout the 1900s, until a gradual population decline resulted in severely reduced harvests in the early 1950s. In 1962, the alligator season in Louisiana was closed, and research studies, focusing on basic life history factors, were undertaken which led to development of a biologically sound management program. Of tremendous importance was the establishment of a rigorous survey method to estimate and monitor population trends.

From 1962 through August 1972, alligators were totally protected. During this time a myriad of state and federal laws regulating harvest distribution and allocation of take, methods of harvest and possession, transportation and export of live alligators, alligator skins and their products was enacted. Similarly, in 1970 the Louisiana legislature recognized that the alligator's value, age at sexual maturity, and vulnerability to hunting required unique consideration and passed legislation providing for a closely regulated experimental commercial harvest.

The goals of the Department's alligator program are to manage and conserve Louisiana's alligators as part of the state's wetland ecosystem, provide benefits to the species, its habitat and the other species of fish and wildlife associated with alligators. The basic philosophy was to develop a sustained use management program which, through regulated harvest, would provide long term benefits to the survival of the species, maintain its habitats, and provide significant economic benefits to the citizens of the state. Since Louisiana's coastal alligator habitats are

primarily privately owned (approximately 81%), our sustained use management program provides direct economic benefit and incentive to private landowners, and alligator hunters who lease land, to protect the alligator and to protect, maintain, and enhance the alligator's wetland habitats. One of the most critical components of the management program was to develop the complex set of regulations which required individual applications for each property to be considered for tag allocation, landowner permission, proof of ownership and detailed review of habitat quality related to alligator abundance, all of which combined to equitably distribute the harvest in relation to population levels.

During the period of total protection (1962-1971) alligator populations increased quickly and by 1972 the Department was ready to initiate its new sustained use management program. On September 5, 1972 the alligator season was reopened in Cameron Parish and a total of 59 hunters harvested 1,350 alligators. The season was expanded to include Vermilion Parish in 1973, Calcasieu Parish in 1975, an additional nine coastal parishes in 1979 and statewide in 1981 (Table 1). In 2006, 30,736 wild alligators were harvested by 2,017 licensed alligator hunters.



**Large male alligator
harvested during
Louisiana's 1972 alligator
season in Cameron parish.**

Oversight by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Five years after Louisiana closed the alligator harvest season, the alligator was listed on the federal Endangered Species Act in 1967. At this time the alligator was considered an endangered species throughout its range. In March of 1974, Louisiana petitioned the Secretary of the Interior, requesting that populations of the alligator in Louisiana be removed from the list of threatened and endangered species in Cameron, Vermilion and Calcasieu Parishes. In subsequent years, similar petitions sought to reclassify the alligator, first in nine additional coastal parishes in 1978 and then statewide in 1981. Each of these petitions was based on results of detailed scientific study and the demonstrated success of the early harvest programs.

Export of alligator skins and products out of the United States is regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). This treaty, which became effective in 1975, regulates the international trade in protected species; its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) administers CITES requirements and controls for the United States. The species covered by CITES are listed on one of three Appendices, according to the degree of protection needed by each species. Currently, the alligator is listed on Appendix II of CITES, because of the similarity of their appearance to other crocodilians that are truly endangered or threatened.

In order to fulfill CITES requirements, the USFWS through a series of rulemakings, has developed a complex set of requirements that the individual states, including Louisiana, must comply with in order to be granted export approval for harvested alligators skins and products. The most critical component in these requirements is that the Department must certify, on an annual basis, that the harvest programs we administer will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. The “no detriment” finding is predicated on our assessment of the current condition of the alligator population, including trends, population estimates or indices, data on total harvest and harvest distribution and habitat suitability evaluation. Additionally, the management program must provide for a rigorously controlled harvest with calculated harvest level objectives. All alligators and eggs harvested must be taken from specifically identified properties and all hides individually tagged (with approved, serially marked CITES export tags furnished by the USFWS). The USFWS requires strict accountability for each tag allocated to the harvester, requiring all unused tags be returned at the close of the season.

Wild Alligator Management Program

In 1970, the Louisiana State Legislature (Act 550) gave the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries full authority to regulate the alligator season in Louisiana. Since that time, the Department has annually inventoried alligator nest production throughout coastal Louisiana in order to assess the status of alligator populations (Figure 1). Results of annual alligator nest surveys are compiled to provide estimates of nest density (acres per nest) by parish and by habitat type (brackish, intermediate, or fresh). Private and publicly owned lands (State and Federal Refuges, and Wildlife Management Areas) are compiled separately.



In June/July 2006, over 3,500 miles of transects were flown, surveying 150,000 acres of wetland habitat. The sampling intensity covers approximately 3.4% of 2.4 million acres of private coastal wetlands, and 4.2-10.4% of some 567,000 acres of public coastal wetlands. During summer 2006 we estimated that only 20,387 alligator nests were present in the coastal marsh habitat, a dramatic decrease from the previous year. Impacts from the devastating hurricanes in 2005 and the subsequent drought in 2006 resulted in reduced nest production throughout coastal Louisiana. Cameron and Vermilion Parishes were particularly impacted with nest production down by nearly 85% from 2005.

Nest density and alligator population estimates are combined with a detailed review of harvest parameters and a general assessment of environmental factors observed during each survey to determine final harvest level objectives. Over 50 individual alligator harvest quotas are developed annually in order to distribute the harvest in relation to alligator abundance in the various habitats across the state. A listing of the 2006 wild alligator harvest quotas is appended as Exhibit 1. In the best habitat one alligator is harvested per 60 acres, while in the poorer habitats one alligator is harvested per 500 acres. Alligator harvest quotas were reduced significantly in areas with the greatest hurricane impacts (by 40% in Cameron Parish and by 45% in Vermilion Parish). Large areas of vegetated wetlands were converted to open water due to storm surge impacts and as of July 2006 many coastal areas in southwest Louisiana remained unvegetated or were covered with dead vegetation.

Alligator hunters annually submit a description of the property on which they have permission to hunt. The Department assesses the habitat quantity and quality and determines the number of alligators that can be harvested by each hunter. This methodology ensures that alligators are harvested in proportion to their population levels and that the harvest will not negatively impact populations at any location. The currently approved quota system represents an allowable wild alligator harvest, which coupled with the state authorized wild alligator egg harvest program represents a level of population utilization currently unparalleled in the world of crocodilian management.

Under this sustained use alligator program, over 730,000 wild alligators have been harvested since 1972 (Table 2). The annual harvest takes place in September to specifically target the adult males and immature segments of the alligator population. Adult females, which typically inhabit interior marshes in September, would be more susceptible to harvest if the season was scheduled during the spring or summer. During the 2006 wild season, a total of 27,312 alligators were harvested, averaging 7.42 feet in length, with an estimated value of \$10.7 million.

In 1999, the Department initiated the “Bonus Alligator Harvest Program” designed to better utilize alligators in the 4’-5’ size classes. Starting in 1999, trappers were issued an additional quantity of “bonus” tags to be used on alligators less than 72 inches in length. The number of “bonus” tags issued is approximately 12% of the trapper’s regular quota. In 2006, we

harvested an additional 3,519 bonus alligators which averaged 6.0 feet in length, valued at nearly \$1.19 million.

Each year the alligator program staff works closely with landowners and alligator hunters to provide assistance regarding alligator management on their respective properties. We have provided numerous habitat base maps to landowners for their use in participation of both the wild and alligator egg harvest programs. Harvest reports summarizing average lengths and size class frequency distribution of harvested alligators are frequently provided and are available for every participant in the wild harvest program.

Farming/Ranching Program

Early alligator farms in Louisiana were generally small, family owned operations; and often run more as a hobby/curiosity than a commercial enterprise. Extensive studies done by Department biologists showed alligators could be efficiently cultured and grown in captivity. Egg ranching (collection of alligator eggs from the wild) proved more economical and successful than captive breeding; private egg collections were first permitted, on a limited basis, in 1986.



Alligator hatchling

Louisiana's alligator ranching program increased dramatically between 1986 and 1990. To ensure wild alligators were not depleted as a result of egg collections, and to ensure future recruitment of sub-adult alligators to the breeding population, the Department currently requires a quantity of juvenile alligators equal to 14% of the eggs hatched by the rancher be returned to the wild within two years of hatching. In April 2007 the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission ratified a rule change which will reduce the return rate to 12% of eggs hatched, limit release sizes to 36 to 54 inches and allow farmers to return up to 5% of their releases in the

size range of 55 to 60 inches. This rule change will be implemented for the 2007 year egg collections.

A variable return rate was established based on the estimated survival rates for wild juvenile alligators. Using the relationship of survival between size classes, we extrapolated return rates based on expected survival rates for alligators from 36 to 60 inches. More alligators must be returned if the average total length is smaller, and fewer animals are required if the average length is larger. Close monitoring of the survival of these alligators will continue for many years.

Enormous effort has been made by the Department to monitor the fate of the alligators released to the wild. In 2006-2007 we released a total of 60,140 farm raised alligators into the wild to maintain wild alligator populations. Each alligator released is measured, sexed, tail-notched, tagged and recorded prior to release to the same area where the farmers had originally harvested the eggs. Although it is costly to the ranchers to fulfill the “returns to the wild” obligation, it is an integral necessity of the program, considering the large number of eggs collected. In 2006, only 272, 295 wild alligator eggs were collected due to hurricane and drought impacts. (Table 3).



LDWF personnel working farm-raised alligators for release into the wild

Currently there are 56 licensed farms in Louisiana (Figure 2). However, the inventory on farms is far higher now (541,257 in December 2006) than when there were over 120 farms (318,000 alligators in December 1991). During the 2005 tag year (September 2005 through August 2006) a total of 256,181 farm alligators were harvested, averaging 3.9 feet in length. The total estimated value of these alligators was \$41.5 million (Table 4). Although those data are still being compiled as skins are exported out of Louisiana, we estimate that in the 2006 tag year nearly 266,000 farm skins will be harvested.

Louisiana's wild and farm alligator skins are exported throughout the world (Figure 3). Approximately 69% of the wild harvested alligator skins are exported to France, Italy, Germany, Singapore and England. Nearly 95% of the farm alligator skins produced in Louisiana are exported abroad.

In order to better meet the needs of the alligator industry, the Department sponsors meetings for all segments of the industry (farmers, hunters, and landowners) which gives the industry participants an opportunity to prioritize the current issues facing the state's alligator program. In addition to the on-site visits, the staff communicates with farmers on a regular basis to schedule releases, hide inspections, live animal inspections, coordinate farm transfers, alligator egg collection permits, issue and follow up on CITES tags and other paperwork.

In the spring of 2007 the Department bid out the sale of alligator eggs from three additional Wildlife Management Areas (Maurepas Swamp, Manchac and Pearl River). This brings the total to four Department owned areas where qualified licensed alligator farmers are allowed to collect alligator eggs to provide stock for their farms. The total allowed alligator egg harvest quota for these areas is 31,500. Additionally the Department submitted a proposal to the USFWS to establish an Experimental Alligator Egg Harvest on the Southwest Louisiana Complex Refuges. The Department and the alligator industry's goal is to maintain and grow alligator production through a system of sound wildlife management practices and regulation including expansion of the wild alligator egg collection program.

Multiple research contracts were administered by the program staff with the LSU and University of Florida Veterinary Schools. On numerous occasions the staff arranged for transportation of sick or problem alligators and sample skins from farms to the LSU and Florida Vet Schools for necropsy or skin evaluation. One of these contracts provides for the availability of a veterinarian to respond to farm related problems. Farmers know they can contact the program staff or Dr. Nevarez and get a rapid response to their problem. We arranged collection and delivery of alligator research specimens to numerous graduate students and university faculty.

Despite setbacks from Hurricane Rita, numerous wildlife groups, including university and graduate students, were hosted at Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge for educational purposes; as were professional representatives from domestic and international organizations. Presentations were made at various civic organizations and captive alligators were often loaned out for educational purposes. Several night counts were made on private land holdings in southwest Louisiana to gather data to develop 2006 and 2007 alligator harvest quotas.

An alligator program newsletter entitled "*Gator Notes*" was first developed in April 2005, and will be mailed to all alligator industry personnel periodically. The newsletter provides a description of current alligator program activities, harvest statistics, research activities and reminders for due dates for hunting applications, alligator egg collection permits, license renewals and reporting requirements. The newsletter is now available on line at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/lawildlife/nongame/alligators.cfm.

Nuisance Alligator Program

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries operates a statewide nuisance alligator control program. The nuisance program is designed to remove problem alligators in order to avoid potential human/alligator conflicts. Through the process of nuisance alligator hunter appointments and annual renewals the Department maintains a statewide network of qualified nuisance alligator hunters. Nuisance alligator complaints are phoned into various Department offices, where complaints are recorded and then forwarded to a nuisance alligator hunter in the vicinity of the complaint. Nuisance hunters respond promptly and catch and remove the alligator as deemed necessary. Hunters are allowed to harvest the nuisance alligator and to process the meat and skin of the alligator for commercial sale. This process provides for immediate response to the problem alligator and for payment to the nuisance alligator hunter, thereby minimizing the program operating costs to the Department. During 2006-2007, a total of 67 nuisance alligator hunters were enrolled in the program; they responded to an estimated 6,000 complaints and harvested approximately 3,000 alligators.

Research Activities

The following list provides a summary of the various research and monitoring projects that the alligator program staff conducted and/or participated in during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Monitoring

1. Evaluation of survival, growth, and reproduction in farm released alligators---This activity involves numerous projects related to survival analysis, growth and reproductive success (farm-released vs. native wild). Due to the recent reduction to the 14% release rate, it is imperative to monitor survival closely. Although some growth information has been published we plan to evaluate growth rates in more detail; we now have "retraps" that were captured 10-15 years since release, and this is undoubtedly one of the largest mark-recapture projects currently in progress. Staff from the LSU Department of Experimental Statistics assists with annual evaluation of survival based on farm "retraps" recovered in September harvests. We are also evaluating dispersal of animals from release sites.

2. Coastwide nest survey---The annual coastal nesting survey is essential for monitoring our alligator population, and is used annually to determine wild alligator and wild alligator egg harvest quotas (for the adult harvest each September as well as egg ranching quotas). This is an integral part of our required "finding of no detriment" needed for export authority. This survey was of particular interest in summer 2006, providing valuable information to evaluate the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the worst drought in 111 years that occurred in fall/winter/spring of 2005-06.

3. Evaluation of statewide harvest program---We continue to closely analyze size class frequency distribution, average size, sex ratios, etc. for alligators harvested each year. This project, coupled with coastwide nest survey will be continued as long as a harvest program is in

place. Data generated from these projects provides the basis for evaluating the impact of our current harvest strategies, and for establishment of annual wild harvest quotas.

4. Evaluation of alligator nest density---LDWF biologists work with selected cooperating alligator farmers to gain access to their GPS data from annual egg collections. This study will facilitate comparisons between our coast wide nest survey and estimates of nest density as recorded by the farmer during egg collections. Some farmers have advised staff of reduced nest production on selected wetlands; this study will allow us to evaluate nest distribution and density changes over time. Data from 2006 was particularly important for comparisons due to the massive impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in late 2005.

5. WNV (West Nile Virus)---The Department, in conjunction with LSUSVM, continues to monitor occurrence of WNV on alligator farms in Louisiana. Initial mortality related to WNV occurred in fall/winter 2003. Aggressive mosquito control on farms has reduced on farm mosquito populations and seems to have reduced the incidence of WNV in 2006-2007. Studies have determined that WNV exposure is a predisposing factor in development of “PIX/LPSA” skin lesions.

Contracts

1. PIX/LPSA etiology - LSUSVM (Dr. Mitchell, Dr. Nevarez)---This project determined that West Nile virus (WNV) is directly implicated in the occurrence of PIX/LPSA skin disease in alligators (funding from USDA/APHIS).

2. Evaluate treatment methods to control fungal-PIX (Dr. Paul Cardeilhac)---Prior work by Dr. Paul Cardeilhac at the University of Florida’s School of Veterinary Medicine suggests PIX may be caused by a fungal organism (*H. werneckii*). This project will evaluate treatment methods using copper and chlorine to control fungal-PIX (funding from USDA/APHIS).

3. Diagnostic services - LSUSVM (Dr. Nevarez)---Dr. Nevarez and Dr. Mitchell are on contract to conduct PIX/LPSA research and to provide diagnostic services as needed for the alligator industry. Farmers may consult with Dr. Nevarez at any time for assistance with any alligator husbandry or disease issue. The work conducted by Dr. Nevarez led to the discovery of West Nile Virus in some alligator farms.

4. LSU Experimental Statistics---The LSU Department of Experimental Statistics is under contract to provide technical statistical expertise for numerous alligator projects; most importantly the evaluation of survival of farm-released alligators, population trends from nesting survey data, and more recently hide grade/length correlations.

5. Toxicology---We collaborated with Dr. Val Lance and his colleagues to analyze reproductive failure in captive adult alligators and a manuscript on these findings was published. Tissue lead levels were evaluated by a graduate student (Master’s degree completed) and the lead manuscript written by Dr. Lance with a Department biologist as a co-author was published. Another manuscript on laser ablation ICP-MS analysis of the microdistribution of lead in alligator femora

was prepared for publication and accepted. We established a new contract with Dr. Lance for further work to determine if any environmental contaminants (heavy metals) exist in wild alligators; preliminary results documented low levels or none detected. Yolk/embryo samples for this project were collected in summer 2005, and tissue samples (liver, kidney, and muscle) from wild harvested alligators were collected in September 2005 and September 2006.

6. Hurricane effects on alligator physiology---We initiated a new study to determine the effects of high salinities seen in the marsh after Hurricane Rita, by collecting blood samples from wild alligators to measure stress hormone (plasma corticosterone) and electrolytes (sodium, potassium, chloride) and osmolality; as well as general body condition and behavior of the alligators. The superimposed drought in winter of 2005-2006 will make interpretation of results difficult. A manuscript was prepared by LDWF staff and presented by Dr. Lance at the IUCN's Crocodile Specialist Group Meeting in Montlimar, France in June 2006; updated findings are being prepared to submit for publication in the scientific literature.

7. Evaluate the health status of farm released alligators---The results of this study will provide information regarding the general health of captive alligators, and can be used to develop better captive husbandry protocols. Establishing a disease surveillance program for captive reared alligators will place the industry closer to the standards of other intensive animal operations such as the swine, cattle, and poultry industries.

8. Determine the use of antibiotics on alligator farms in Louisiana and determine the pharmacokinetic disposition and tissue distribution of tetracycline after single-dose administration---This project will provide important information regarding the use of antibiotics on alligator farms in Louisiana and the pharmacokinetics and tissue distribution of an important antibiotic (tetracycline) used for alligators. This information can be used by veterinarians and alligator ranchers to determine appropriate antibiotic treatment regimens for captive animals with susceptible infections. This research will also provide much needed information regarding the elimination of this antibiotic from the alligators.

Other Research

We initiated a new study with Dr. Karen Sweazea and Dr. Eldon Braun in spring 2006 to evaluate leptin, a hormone associated with digestion that is an indicator of adiposity. This may be helpful information for alligator farmers, as alligator hides are sold based on belly width and this information may help us enhance body condition in alligators.

We collected blood samples to check for WNV exposure in wild alligators, all were negative and a manuscript is in press.

We are currently collaborating on projects with Dr. Mark Merchant (unfunded) to evaluate anti-microbial properties of alligator plasma. Although diseases are generally rare in alligators, this work may help on the rare occasion of disease in farmed alligators, in terms of evaluating cause and treatment options. Dr. Merchant has published several manuscripts co-authored by Department biologists, and a paper on the febrile response to induced infection in

alligators was recently published.

We investigated the use of blood telomere lengths (DNA fragments) as a tool to determine age of alligators; a manuscript was published in the scientific literature.

We are evaluating nest site fidelity by female alligators using DNA “retraps” and preparing a manuscript to submit for publication.

We have several years of data on alligator dispersal (caught live on Rockefeller, and subsequently harvested “off” Rockefeller). Several have migrated very long distances (20-36 miles) which is important data to consider in evaluating our farm “release to the wild” program. Additional data collected in September 2006 and 2007 will help us evaluate effects of Hurricane Rita and severe drought on alligator displacement.

Revenue and Expenditure Information

In recognizing that the Louisiana alligator industry is a vital aspect of Louisiana’s economy and recognizing the many, varied national and international impediments to industry development, and the need to develop and maintain a total alligator conservation program, the Louisiana legislature established the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund in 1991 (R.S. 56:279). This Act established a dedicated source of revenue intended to help defray the costs of the alligator program within the Fur and Refuge Division of the Department. The specific goals of the legislation are:

1. To provide salaries and financial support including associated indirect cost for the following positions, to provide a minimum of two full-time technical positions (biologists) and eight nontechnical positions such as computer operators, secretaries, and wildlife specialists existing within the Fur and Refuge Division of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.
2. To assist with funding for law enforcement activities associated with the alligator farm industry when surplus funds are available and recommended by the Louisiana Fur and Alligator Advisory Council.
3. To assist with funding marketing programs recommended by the Louisiana Fur and Alligator Advisory Council when surplus funds are available.
4. To actively fund research on all aspects involved with alligator conservation and to develop the techniques needed to enhance the commercial alligator industry.
5. To assist in funding management of the alligator population through proper management, harvest and farm facility management.

This legislation provides all the enabling language required to establish the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund including sources of income, investing of the fund, and expenditures from the fund. Further R.S. 56: 253 establishes the alligator hide tag fee and the alligator shipping label fee, specifies the details of collection of these fees, and establishes that these fees shall be no more than \$4.00 per hide or live alligator. R.S.56:256, provides for the collection of

a \$0.25 severance tax on each alligator hide taken within the state. R.S. 56:279 C (1) provides that all revenues received by the state from tag fees, alligator shipping label fees, and from the severance tax on alligator skins shall be credited to the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund. During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, \$1,418,942 was deposited into the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund. The alligator industry should be applauded for supporting these legislative endeavors to create a self-generated source of revenue to develop and maintain the state's alligator management program. Annual income and expenditure data for the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund is reported in Table 5.

Table 6 summarizes the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund expenditures by the alligator management program for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 fiscal years. Expenditures by the alligator management program totaled \$1,117,938 in 2006-2007. Salary and related benefits constituted 63% of total expenditures. Currently the alligator program staff consists of seven biologists, four wildlife technicians, and two administrative specialists. Additionally, in 2006-2007 we supplemented the permanent staff with three wildlife technicians, hired as six-month restricted appointments to assist in the farm alligator release program.

All expenditures from the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund are provided for in R.S. 56:279. The Department carefully approves and monitors all expenditures to ensure compliance with all legal requirements. The Department's fiscal office can produce a variety of expenditure and budget reports upon request.

Hurricane Impacts

Coastal Louisiana was impacted by two devastating hurricanes in 2005. Hurricane Katrina struck southeastern Louisiana on 29 August, and Hurricane Rita hit southwestern Louisiana on 24 September. Massive tidal storm surges inundated coastal marshes with high salinity waters across virtually the entire coast of Louisiana; which is prime alligator habitat. Some direct alligator mortality was observed; but overall long-term impact of these storms on alligator habitat remains to be seen. Direct physical damage to wetlands through scour, scrapes, erosion, and rolling has been noted, and high salinities were accentuated by lower than usual winter rainfall after the storms, which might have tempered the deleterious salinities. Effects of these storms on the 2005 wild alligator harvest were limited, as the season dates were adjusted to allow for maximum participation and resumption of infrastructure needed to conduct a successful harvest. Some short-term effects were seen on regional commercial alligator farming operations where power was lost for several weeks; however, overall farm mortality was quite limited.

The annual coastal nesting survey was conducted in July 2006. As anticipated, habitat damages in southwest Louisiana and extreme southeast Louisiana were significant and ongoing. Nest production in 2006 was the lowest on record since 1986. During the fall and winter of 2006-2007 marsh water levels returned to near normal and the habitat recovered significantly. Annual nest surveys in 2007 will provide valuable data as we continue to evaluate the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on coastal alligator populations and their habitats. Preliminary

results from farmers collecting alligator eggs in June 2007 indicate that nest production has recovered substantially from 2006.

A record 507,000 alligator eggs were collected in summer 2005 (prior to the hurricanes) as part of Louisiana's egg ranching program; many of these might have been lost due to flooding of eggs or direct mortality of young hatchlings had the landowners/ranchers not participated in the egg ranching program. This provides strong support for the concept of sustained use of wildlife resources, which otherwise would have been lost to natural mortality.

Habitat Concerns

One threat or potential limiting factor to Louisiana's alligator population is habitat loss. Because the vast majority of Louisiana's alligators are in the coastal parishes, saltwater intrusion and wetlands/marsh deterioration from numerous causes are very real threats. Additionally, the combined impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita may result in long term reduction of alligator habitat quality in coastal Louisiana.

Vast resources by numerous state and federal agencies have been expended to attempt to limit these losses. Projects to restore/enhance marshes include construction of earthen terraces (to reduce wave action and turbidity), "breakwaters" and protection levees along coastlines, and freshwater diversions. Alligators benefit directly from these efforts to maintain/enhance wetlands. The freshwater diversion projects (Davis Pond and Caernarvon) shift water from the Mississippi River in hopes of re-establishing more favorable salinity conditions for numerous fish and wildlife species. Some preliminary data suggests alligator nesting has improved in the areas enhanced by lower marsh salinity levels. It is critical that habitat changes are monitored, mapped and incorporated periodically into the alligator program. This will ensure that our harvest programs are adjusted accordingly for corresponding alligator population and habitat changes.

Summary

Louisiana's alligator management program has clearly illustrated that controlled sustained use of the species is feasible. The wild harvest has been in place for 35 years and the egg ranching program for 21 years and may appear to operate unchanged every year. However, constant adaptations are made to try to improve both programs. Constant requests by user groups (farmers, egg ranchers, trappers, landowners, buyers, dealers and other industry personnel) are received and considered as the Department strives to safely manage the alligator resource to the benefit of many user groups with varied interests.

Louisiana's alligator industry is unique. It has recognized the necessity of establishing a self-generated revenue source to provide the necessary regulatory and management efforts to effectively manage the alligator resource. The Department will continue to protect the alligator resource while striving to ensure long term, sustainable harvest programs. During 2006-2007 the

Department, through the use of the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund, has worked toward achievement of the goals established by the Louisiana Legislature.



Figure 1. Louisiana Coastal Marsh Alligator Nest Production, 1970-2006

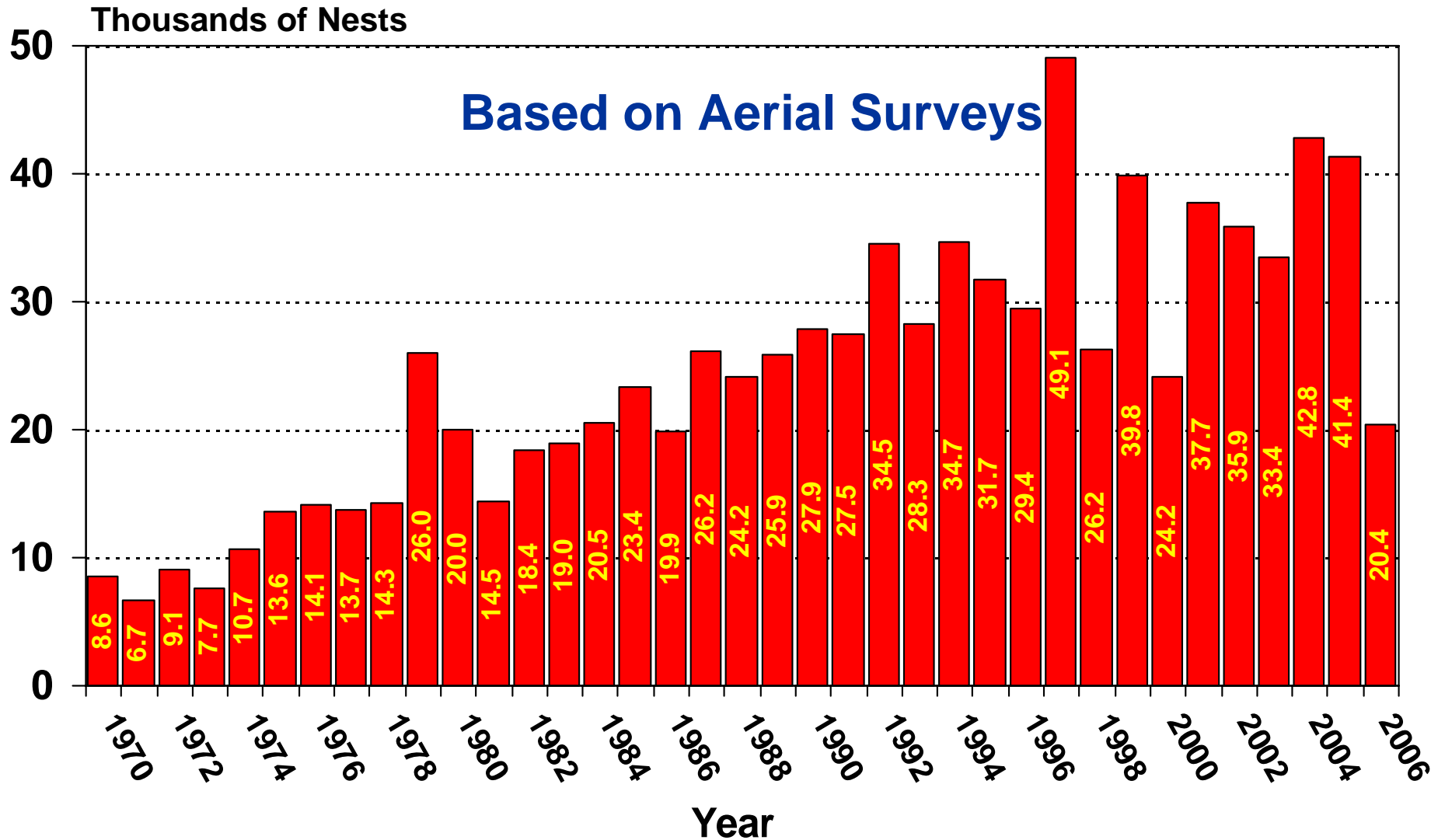


Figure 2. Louisiana Alligator Farm Inventory and Locations, December 2006

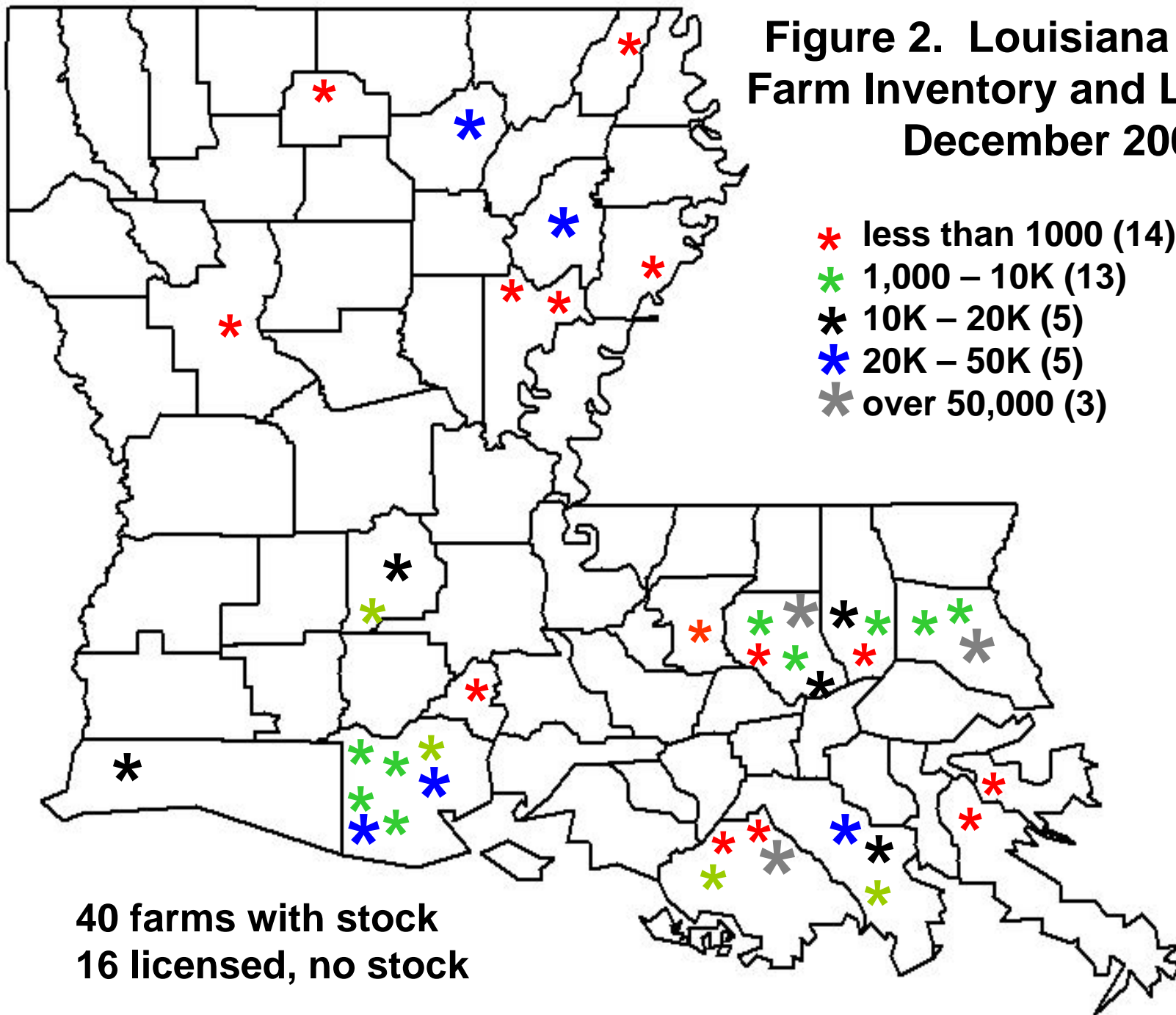
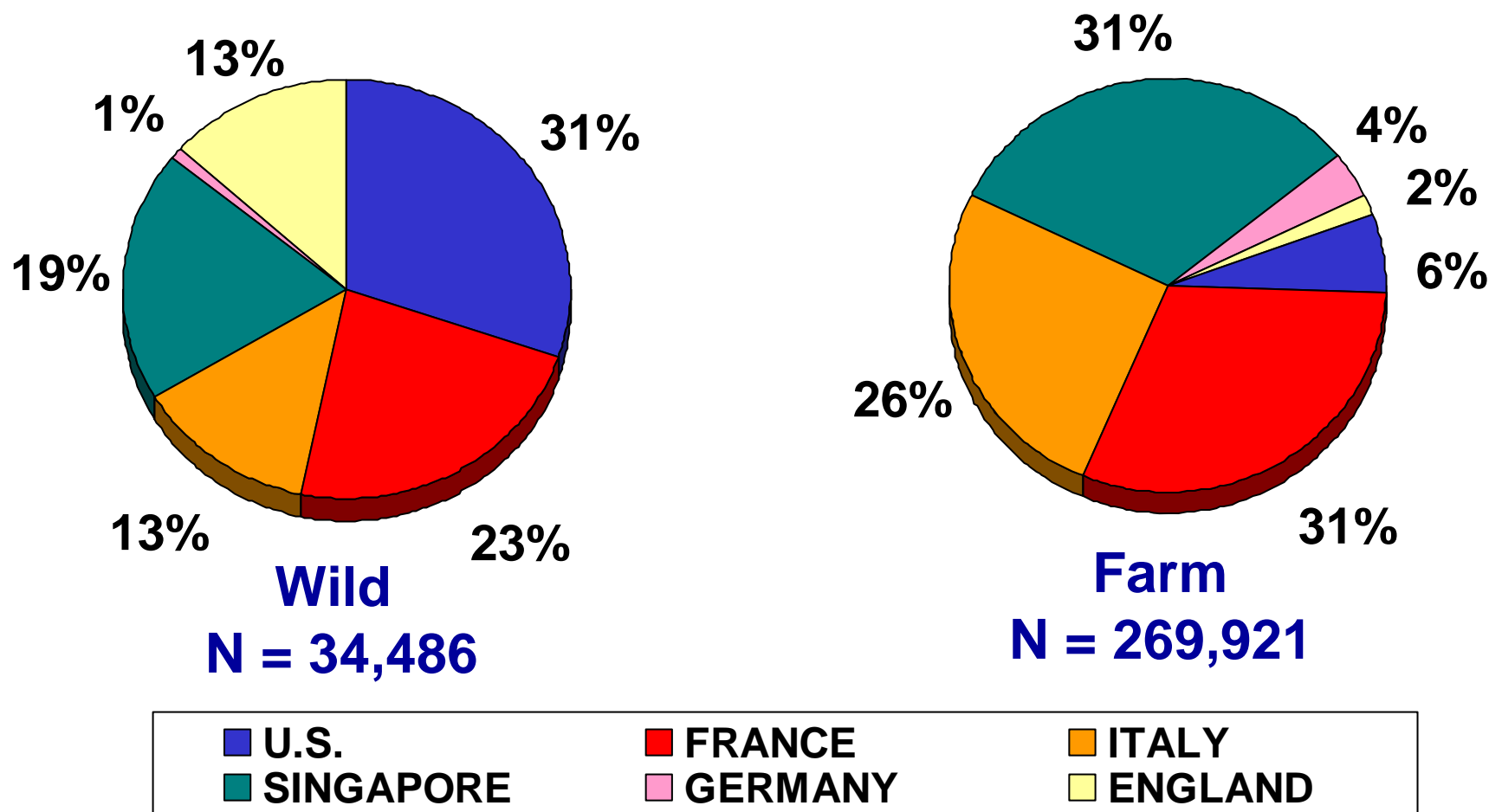


Figure 3. Receivers of Louisiana's 2006 Raw Alligator Skins *



* 2006 Tag Year for Wild and Farm, Updated December 2007

Table 1. Louisiana Alligator Season Dates, Area Open, Harvest Level and Tag Cost, 1972-2006

| Year | Season Dates | No. of Days | Parishes | Tag Fee | |
|----------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|--------------------|
| | | | | Amount | Paid By |
| 1972 | 5 Sept – 17 Sept | 13 | Cameron | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1973 | 10 Sept – 28 Sept | 19 | Added Vermilion | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1975 | 20 Sept – 19 Oct | 30 | Added Calcasieu | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1976 | 9 Sept – 8 Oct | 30 | No change | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1977 | 1 Sept – 30 Sept | 30 | No change | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1979 | 7 Sept – 7 Oct | 31 | Coastwide * | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1980 | 4 Sept – 4 Oct | 31 | No change | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1981 | 31 Aug – 30 Sept | 31 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1982 | 4 Sept – 3 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1983 | 10 Sept – 9 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1984 | 8 Sept – 7 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1985 | 31 Aug- 30 Sept | 31 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1986 | 6 Sept – 6 Oct | 31 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1987 | 5 Sept – 5 Oct | 31 | Statewide | \$5.00 ** | hunter/farmer |
| 1988 | 10 Sept – 10 Oct | 31 | Statewide | \$2.00/tag | hunter/farmer |
| 1989 | 9 Sept – 8 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | hunter/farmer |
| 1990 | 1 Sept – 30 Sept | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | hunter/farmer |
| 1991 | 31 Aug – 29 Sept | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | hunter/farmer |
| 1992 | 10 Sept – 4 Oct | 25 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | hunter/farmer |
| 1993 | 11 Sept – 10 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1994 | 3 Sept – 2 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1995 | 2 Sept – 1 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1996 | 7 Sept – 6 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1997 | 6 Sept – 5 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1998 | 2 Sept – 1 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 1999 | 1 Sept – 30 Sept | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2000 | 30 Aug – 30 Sept | 32 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2001 | 29 Aug – 30 Sept | 33 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2002 | 28 Aug – 30 Sept | 34 | Statewide | \$2.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2003 | 3 Sept – 2 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$2.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2004 | 1 Sept – 30 Sept | 30 | Statewide | \$3.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2005 *** | 14 Sept – 30 Oct | 46 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |
| 2006 | 6 Sept – 5 Oct | 30 | Statewide | \$4.00/tag | fur dealer/shipper |

* Added Iberia, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Charles, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany

** Per issuance, regardless of number

*** Opening date was postponed and season was extended due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Table 2. September Wild Alligator Harvest in Louisiana, 1972-2006 *

| Year ** | Commercial Hunters | Tags Issued | Number Taken | Percent Success | Avg T. L. in Feet | Skin Value | | Meat **** | |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | | | Avg/foot | Total | Amount (lbs) | Value |
| 1972 | 59 | 1,961 | 1,350 | 68.8 | 6.92 | \$8.10 | \$75,670 | *** | *** |
| 1973 | 107 | 3,243 | 2,921 | 90.1 | 7.58 | \$13.13 | \$290,714 | *** | *** |
| 1975 | 191 | 4,645 | 4,420 | 95.2 | 7.51 | \$7.88 | \$261,570 | *** | *** |
| 1976 | 198 | 4,767 | 4,389 | 92.1 | 7.09 | \$16.55 | \$515,003 | *** | *** |
| 1977 | 236 | 5,760 | 5,474 | 95 | 7.35 | \$12.23 | \$492,061 | *** | *** |
| 1979 | 708 | 17,516 | 16,300 | 93 | 6.92 | \$15.00 | \$1,691,940 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1980 | 796 | 19,134 | 17,692 | 92.5 | 6.59 | \$13.00 | \$1,515,674 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1981 | 913 | 15,534 | 14,870 | 95.7 | 6.92 | \$17.50 | \$1,800,757 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1982 | 1,184 | 18,188 | 17,142 | 94.2 | 6.82 | \$13.50 | \$1,578,264 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1983 | 945 | 17,130 | 16,154 | 94.3 | 6.92 | \$13.00 | \$1,453,214 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1984 | 1,104 | 18,386 | 17,389 | 94.6 | 6.99 | \$21.00 | \$2,552,531 | 100,089 | \$125,000 |
| 1985 | 1,076 | 17,466 | 16,691 | 95.6 | 7.09 | \$21.00 | \$2,485,123 | 150,133 | \$675,000 |
| 1986 | 1,207 | 23,267 | 22,429 | 96 | 6.92 | \$23.00 | \$3,569,800 | 310,275 | \$1,395,000 |
| 1987 | 1,370 | 24,635 | 23,892 | 97 | 7.09 | \$40.00 | \$6,775,771 | 500,444 | \$2,250,000 |
| 1988 | 1,545 | 24,111 | 23,526 | 98 | 7.25 | \$48.00 | \$8,187,048 | 600,533 | \$3,000,000 |
| 1989 | 1,769 | 25,492 | 24,846 | 97.4 | 7.25 | \$50.00 | \$9,006,675 | 747,448 | \$3,000,000 |
| 1990 | 1,921 | 26,051 | 25,575 | 98.2 | 7.25 | \$57.00 | \$10,568,869 | 701,063 | \$3,000,000 |
| 1991 | 1,995 | 24,532 | 23,870 | 97.3 | 7.45 | \$32.00 | \$5,690,608 | 684,109 | \$2,935,000 |
| 1992 | 1,686 | 25,378 | 24,000 | 94 | 7.25 | \$23.00 | \$4,002,000 | 687,835 | \$2,951,520 |
| 1993 | 1,702 | 24,805 | 23,991 | 96.7 | 7.25 | \$23.00 | \$4,000,499 | 687,615 | \$2,889,000 |
| 1994 | 1,774 | 27,694 | 27,120 | 97.9 | 7.35 | \$37.00 | \$7,375,284 | 771,610 | \$3,243,000 |
| 1995 | 1,877 | 28,931 | 28,442 | 98.3 | 7.35 | \$41.00 | \$8,570,997 | 809,088 | \$3,400,000 |
| 1996 | 1,948 | 26,578 | 25,789 | 97 | 7.41 | \$25.00 | \$4,777,412 | 734,793 | \$3,967,800 |
| 1997 | 1,973 | 29,900 | 29,085 | 97.3 | 7.08 | \$18.00 | \$3,706,592 | 828,423 | \$4,473,000 |
| 1998 | 1,888 | 30,198 | 28,639 | 94.8 | 7.08 | \$15.00 | \$3,041,462 | 804,679 | \$4,350,000 |
| 1999 regular | 1,902 | 33,279 | 32,097 | 96.4 | 7.17 | \$22.00 | \$5,062,981 | 909,398 | \$4,881,000 |
| 1999 bonus | | 3,308 | 3,173 | 95.9 | 5.75 | \$15.50 | \$282,794 | 44,335 | \$237,250 |
| 2000 regular | 1,941 | 31,999 | 30,532 | 95.4 | 7.17 | \$27.00 | \$5,910,690 | 1,061,903 | \$5,702,419 |
| 2000 bonus | | 3,299 | 3,146 | 95.4 | 5.75 | \$23.00 | \$416,059 | 56,785 | \$303,801 |
| 2001 regular | 1,916 | 32,738 | 31,935 | 97.5 | 7.33 | \$22.00 | \$5,149,838 | 734,505 | \$3,305,273 |
| 2001 bonus | | 3,333 | 3,213 | 96.4 | 5.83 | \$20.00 | \$374,636 | 73,899 | \$332,546 |
| 2002 regular | 1,955 | 31,847 | 30,487 | 95.7 | 7.25 | \$16.00 | \$3,536,492 | 701,201 | \$3,155,405 |
| 2002 bonus | | 3,280 | 2,896 | 88.3 | 5.83 | \$16.00 | \$270,139 | 66,608 | \$299,736 |
| 2003 regular | 1,873 | 30,533 | 28,570 | 93.6 | 7.17 | \$13.00 | \$2,663,010 | 657,110 | \$2,956,995 |
| 2003 bonus | | 3,270 | 3,011 | 92.1 | 5.83 | \$13.00 | \$228,204 | 69,253 | \$311,639 |
| 2004 regular | 1,859 | 31,573 | 30,447 | 96.4 | 7.17 | \$22.50 | \$4,911,862 | 700,281 | \$3,151,265 |
| 2004 bonus | | 3,662 | 3,476 | 94.9 | 5.83 | \$22.50 | \$455,964 | 79,948 | \$359,766 |
| 2005 regular | 1,936 | 32,569 | 27,728 | 85.1 | 7.25 | \$34.50 | \$6,935,466 | 637,744 | \$2,869,848 |
| 2005 bonus | | 4,008 | 3,436 | 85.7 | 5.83 | \$34.50 | \$691,100 | 79,028 | \$355,626 |
| 2006 regular | 1,872 | 28,522 | 27,312 | 95.8 | 7.42 | \$39.00 | \$7,903,547 | 628,176 | \$2,826,792 |
| 2006 bonus | | 3,689 | 3,519 | 95.4 | 6.00 | \$39.00 | \$823,446 | 80,937 | \$364,217 |

* Does not include Salvador WMA harvests from 1972-2003 and Marsh Island experimental, nuisance, and farm harvests from 1972-present.

** The bonus tag program was initiated in 1999 to increase the overall number of wild alligators harvested without putting any additional pressure on the 6' and over portion of the wild population.

*** Sale of meat not permitted; La. Health Department regulations first allowed meat sales in 1979.

**** Bone in from 1979-1984, deboned from 1985-present.

_____ Subject to change, numbers updated November 27, 2007.

Table 3. Louisiana Alligator Ranching, 1986-2006

| Year | Total Eggs Permitted | Number Collected | Percent Collected | Number Hatched | Alligators Returned to Wild |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1986 | 2,903 | 2,903 | 100.0% | 1,985 | none |
| 1987 | 19,641 | 18,041 | 91.9% | 13,782 | none |
| 1988 | 90,305 | 64,887 | 71.9% | 50,394 | 1,680 |
| 1989 | 265,051 | 181,819 | 68.6% | 137,323 | 7,078 |
| 1990 | 366,055 | 293,412 | 80.2% | 231,434 | 6,088 |
| 1991 | 333,451 | 198,089 | 59.4% | 165,054 | 44,405 |
| 1992 | 297,125 | 164,892 | 55.5% | 133,463 | 35,531 |
| 1993 | 279,405 | 155,891 | 55.8% | 123,666 | 28,512 |
| 1994 | 362,835 | 266,408 | 73.4% | 223,011 | 21,633 |
| 1995 | 402,830 | 314,371 | 78.0% | 261,428 | 20,749 |
| 1996 | 467,545 | 279,237 | 59.7% | 233,076 | 40,919 |
| 1997 | 476,115 | 377,636 | 79.3% | 321,641 | 48,171 |
| 1998 | 539,216 | 280,870 | 52.1% | 240,118 | 36,733 |
| 1999 | 574,731 | 382,611 | 66.6% | 332,428 | 44,169 |
| 2000 | 593,625 | 279,217 | 47.0% | 236,313 | 39,559 |
| 2001 | 616,465 | 354,636 | 57.5% | 294,405 | 48,288 |
| 2002 | 639,145 | 354,523 | 55.5% | 304,448 | 32,716 |
| 2003 | 651,207 | 357,757 | 54.9% | 307,805 | 50,417 |
| 2004 | 619,730 | 397,569 | 64.2% | 350,661 | 47,431 |
| 2005 | 694,694 | 507,315 | 73.0% | 441,298 | 35,752 |
| 2006 | 739,844 | 272,295 | 36.8% | 225,201 | 40,740 |
| | | | | | |
| Total | 9,031,918 | 5,504,379 | 60.9% | 4,628,934 | 630,571 |

Table 4. Farm Alligator Harvest in Louisiana, 1972-2005 *

| Year * | No. Farms | | No. Skins Sold | Avg T. L. in Feet | Skin Value | | Meat *** | |
|--------|-----------|------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Licensed | Sold Skins | | | Avg/foot | Total | Amount (lbs) | Value |
| 1972 | 8 | 3 | 35 | 5 | \$8.10 | \$1,418 | ** | ** |
| 1973 | 8 | 5 | 103 | 6.33 | \$13.13 | \$8,561 | ** | ** |
| 1975 | 8 | 3 | 83 | 5.5 | \$7.88 | \$3,597 | ** | ** |
| 1976 | 8 | 3 | 360 | 5.75 | \$16.55 | \$34,259 | ** | ** |
| 1977 | 8 | 4 | 376 | 5.25 | \$12.23 | \$24,142 | ** | ** |
| 1980 | 8 | 1 | 191 | 4.67 | \$13.00 | \$11,596 | 957 | \$3,342 |
| 1981 | 8 | 3 | 360 | 4.67 | \$17.50 | \$29,421 | 1,801 | \$6,300 |
| 1982 | 8 | 1 | 113 | 4 | \$13.50 | \$6,102 | 452 | \$1,582 |
| 1983 | 14 | 6 | 1,449 | 4.58 | \$13.00 | \$86,273 | 7,253 | \$25,357 |
| 1984 | 12 | 7 | 2,836 | 4.25 | \$21.00 | \$253,113 | 11,354 | \$39,704 |
| 1985 | 15 | 12 | 4,430 | 4.25 | \$21.00 | \$395,378 | 17,736 | \$79,740 |
| 1986 | 22 | 15 | 5,925 | 4.5 | \$23.00 | \$613,238 | 26,687 | \$119,983 |
| 1987 | 30 | 23 | 10,670 | 4.42 | \$24.00 | \$1,131,874 | 48,060 | \$216,067 |
| 1988 | 47 | 38 | 27,749 | 4.25 | \$36.00 | \$4,245,597 | 111,094 | \$554,980 |
| 1989 | 83 | 68 | 66,737 | 3.98 | \$32.00 | \$8,499,624 | 300,877 | \$1,202,362 |
| 1990 | 123 | 80 | 88,424 | 4.03 | \$24.00 | \$8,552,369 | 397,732 | \$1,786,059 |
| 1991 | 134 | 91 | 118,976 | 4.13 | \$15.00 | \$7,370,563 | 536,379 | \$2,380,000 |
| 1992 | 125 | 85 | 128,026 | 4.04 | \$12.00 | \$6,206,700 | 578,289 | \$2,566,000 |
| 1993 | 101 | 70 | 121,700 | 3.87 | \$17.00 | \$8,006,643 | 388,010 | \$1,720,000 |
| 1994 | 89 | 62 | 136,126 | 3.67 | \$20.00 | \$9,991,648 | 277,780 | \$1,197,000 |
| 1995 | 83 | 50 | 125,460 | 3.88 | \$20.00 | \$9,735,696 | 331,395 | \$1,323,000 |
| 1996 | 81 | 51 | 161,845 | 3.91 | \$15.50 | \$9,808,616 | 511,668 | \$2,297,900 |
| 1997 | 75 | 36 | 169,988 | 3.74 | \$16.75 | \$10,648,898 | 542,332 | \$2,435,700 |
| 1998 | 73 | 38 | 154,399 | 3.79 | \$17.00 | \$9,947,928 | 490,990 | \$2,209,455 |
| 1999 | 64 | 35 | 187,570 | 3.64 | \$17.00 | \$11,606,832 | 552,693 | \$2,487,119 |
| 2000 | 66 | 35 | 219,827 | 3.81 | \$20.50 | \$17,169,588 | 659,481 | \$2,967,665 |
| 2001 | 63 | 32 | 180,391 | 3.79 | \$20.50 | \$14,015,479 | 541,173 | \$2,435,279 |
| 2002 | 62 | 32 | 237,808 | 3.73 | \$23.50 | \$20,845,060 | 713,424 | \$3,210,408 |
| 2003 | 61 | 32 | 277,102 | 3.81 | \$24.00 | \$25,338,207 | 831,306 | \$3,740,877 |
| 2004 | 58 | 31 | 294,918 | 3.87 | \$26.00 | \$29,674,649 | 884,754 | \$3,981,393 |
| 2005 | 55 | 31 | 256,181 | 3.91 | \$38.00 | \$38,063,373 | 768,543 | \$3,458,444 |

* Tag year extends from September of the year designated to the next September (example: 1997 = 9/97 to 8/98).

** Sale of meat not permitted; La. Health Department regulations first allowed meat sales in 1979.

*** Deboned from 1980-present.

— Subject to change, numbers updated November 27, 2007.

Table 5. Alligator Resource Fund Income, Expenditures, and Balance, 1994-2007

| | FY 1994 | FY 1995 | FY 1996 | FY 1997 | FY 1998 | FY 1999 | FY 2000 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Severance | 31,787 | 39,461 | 39,642 | 43,792 | 49,324 | 48,538 | 54,124 |
| Interest | 13,028 | 28,696 | 40,589 | 55,587 | 80,441 | 84,776 | 108,758 |
| Shipping Label Fees | 11,420 | 63,744 | 156,588 | 103,940 | 107,272 | 123,120 | 187,948 |
| Tag/collection permit fees | 522,813 | 634,264 | 636,221 | 703,673 | 792,742 | 779,566 | 869,551 |
| Misc income | | | 420 | 500 | 1,043 | 350 | 300 |
| Total Revenue | 579,048 | 766,165 | 873,460 | 907,492 | 1,030,822 | 1,036,350 | 1,220,681 |
| Less Expenditures | -580,437 | -578,058 | -576,285 | -561,308 | -619,779 | -722,027 | -1,102,752 |
| Net annual income | -1,389 | 188,107 | 297,175 | 346,184 | 411,043 | 314,323 | 117,929 |
| Add balance from prior year | 345,393 | 344,004 | 532,111 | 829,286 | 1,175,470 | 1,586,513 | 1,900,836 |
| YEAR-END BALANCE | 344,004 | 532,111 | 829,286 | 1,175,470 | 1,586,513 | 1,900,836 | 2,018,765 |
| | FY 2001 | FY 2002 | FY 2003 ¹ | FY 2004 ¹ | FY 2005 ¹ | FY 2006 | FY 2007 |
| Severance | 62,220 | 51,744 | 64,630 | 66,006 | 83,732 | 76,166 | 77,224 |
| Interest | 132,696 | 84,081 | 47,379 | 25,498 | 38,120 | 72,961 | 93,166 |
| Shipping Label Fees | 92,763 | 100,296 | 100,540 | 91,232 | 94,900 | 69,196 | 9,800 |
| Tag/collection permit fees | 1,011,688 | 901,710 | 633,066 | 529,642 | 890,116 | 1,098,394 | 1,238,752 |
| Misc income | 400 | 100 | | | | | |
| Total Revenue | 1,299,767 | 1,137,931 | 845,615 | 712,378 | 1,106,868 | 1,316,717 | 1,418,942 |
| Less Expenditures | -930,674 | -1,070,743 | -1,263,509 | -1,076,078 | -1,165,338 | -1,230,310 | -1,317,939 |
| Net annual income | 369,093 | 67,188 | -417,894 | -363,700 | -58,470 | 86,407 | 101,003 |
| Add balance from prior year | 2,018,765 | 2,387,857 | 2,455,046 | 2,037,153 | 1,673,453 | 1,614,983 | 1,701,390 |
| YEAR-END BALANCE | 2,387,858 | 2,455,045 | 2,037,152 | 1,673,453 | 1,614,983 | 1,701,390 | 1,802,393 |

¹ Due to the reduction in the alligator hide tag fee, ARF expenditures exceeded ARF income, thereby resulting in a net annual loss of revenue in the ARF.

Table 6. Alligator Management Program Expenditures for Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007

| Budget Category | 2006 | 2007 |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Personal Services | \$622,653 | \$708,428 |
| Travel | \$9,656 | \$17,241 |
| Operating Services | \$64,214 | \$92,835 |
| Supplies | \$84,334 | \$115,544 |
| Professional Services | \$10,260 | \$21,614 |
| Other Charges | \$108,415 | \$86,788 |
| Acquisitions | \$82,790 | \$38,182 |
| Major Repairs | -\$2,993 | \$8,671 |
| Interagency Billings | \$19,200 | \$28,636 |
| Totals | \$998,529 | \$1,117,939 |

EXHIBIT 1

2006 MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY PARISH

| | Tag Allotment/Marsh Type | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------|
| | Brackish | Intermediate | Fresh |
| ^(A) Cameron | 1:380 | 1:170 | 1:135 |
| Calcasieu | 1:250 | 1:110 | 1:90 |
| Jeff Davis | | | 1:90 |
| ^(B) Vermilion West | 1:140 | 1:140 | 1:175 |
| ^(B) Vermilion East | 1:225 | 1:225 | 1:75 |
| Iberia | | 1:150 | 1:150 |
| St. Mary | | 1:70 | 1:70 |
| Terrebonne | 1:150 | 1:60 | 1:60 |
| Lafourche | 1:175 | 1:65 | 1:80 |
| St. Charles | 1:100 | 1:100 | 1:70 |
| St. John the Baptist | | 1:70 | 1:65 |
| Jefferson | 1:250 | 1:70 | 1:60 |
| Orleans | 1:500 | 1:500 | |
| ^(C) Plaquemines West | 1:300 | 1:200 | 1:60 |
| ^(D) Plaquemines East | 1:500 | 1:150 | 1:60 |
| Plaquemines Delta | 1:225 | 1:175 | 1:160 |
| St. Bernard | 1:400 | 1:150 | |
| St. Tammany | 1:175 | 1:100 | 1:100 |
| Tangipahoa | | 1:80 | 1:140 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Cypress-Tupelo Swamp | 1:190 |
| Dewatered Marsh | 1:700 |
| Transitional Marsh ^(E) | 1:500 |

^(A)Marsh between Calcasieu Lake/Calcasieu River and Mermentau River will be issued at the rate of 1 tag:300 acres in intermediate marsh and 1 tag:445 acres in brackish marsh.

^(B)The dividing line for Vermilion East and West is the Vermilion River Cutoff (4-mile cut).

^(C)Marsh west of Mississippi River.

^(D)Marsh east of Mississippi River.

^(E)Marsh areas which are characterized by a generally declining alligator population caused by degradation of habitat.

2006 BONUS TAG ISSUANCE

Special experimental Bonus tags for alligators in the less than 6' (<6') size classes will be issued to each hunter, based upon his 2006 regular tag allocation. Bonus tags will be issued according to the following table:

| Number of 2007 Regular Tags Allocated | Number of Experimental Bonus Tags to be Issued |
|--|---|
| 1-9 | 1 |
| 10-18 | 2 |
| 19-27 | 3 |
| 28-36 | 4 |
| 37-45 | 5 |
| 46-54 | 6 |
| 55-63 | 7 |
| 64-72 | 8 |
| 73-81 | 9 |
| 82-90 | 10 |
| 91-99 | 11 |
| 100-108 | 12 |
| 109-117 | 13 |
| 118-126 | 14 |
| 127-135 | 15 |
| 136-144 | 16 |
| 145-153 | 17 |
| Continue in increments of 8 tags | |

Special considerations:

1. Bonus harvest should come from less than 6' (<6') size alligators.
2. Bonus alligators must be tagged according to Department regulations with a special experimental Bonus tag (color = white).
3. Hunter compliance with this experimental program is voluntary; compliance will be monitored through computer analysis of harvest data. Non-compliance may impact allocation of bonus tags for the alligator season in 2007.

**2006 NON-MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY ZONE AND PARISH
LAKE REGION**

| ZONE | PARISH | HABITAT | ACRES OF HABITAT | TAG ALLOTMENT | REMARKS |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|---|
| Minden | Bienville/ Bossier/ Webster | Lake Bistineau | 1,720 | 20 | Public Lake (Experimental Lottery Harvest) |
| | Bossier | Black/Cypress Lake | 400 | 10 | |
| | Caddo | Cross Lake | 500 | 20 | |
| | Bienville | Kepler Lake | 250 | 10 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 2870 | 60 | |
| Monroe | Ouachita | Bayou Desaird | 580 | 5 | Public Lake (Experimental Lottery Harvest) |
| | Ouachita/ Morehouse | Bartholomew Lake | 405 | 5 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 985 | 10 | |
| Tioga | Rapides | Kincaid | 1,000 | 5 | Public Lake (Experimental Harvest) |
| | Winn | Saline | 3,000 | 10 | Public Lake (Experimental Harvest) |
| | Sabine | Toledo Bend | 4,000 | 15 | Public Lake (Experimental Harvest) |
| | Lasalle | Dewey Wills WMA | 8,000 | 25 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 16,000 | 55 | |

**2006 NON-MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY ZONE AND PARISH
LAKE REGION**

| ZONE | PARISH | HABITAT | ACRES OF HABITAT | TAG ALLOTMENT | REMARKS |
|------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ferriday | Concordia | Three Rivers WMA | 4,500 | 45 | Experimental Lottery Harvest |
| | | Red River WMA | 3,500 | 35 | Experimental Lottery Harvest |
| | | Lake Concordia | 800 | 15 | Public Lake (Experimental) |
| | Tensas | Big Lake WMA | 1,000 | 10 | Experimental Lottery Harvest |
| | | Buckhorn WMA | 300 | 5 | Experimental Lottery Harvest |
| | | Lake St. Joseph | 800 | 20 | Public Lake (Experimental) |
| | | Lake Bruin | 2,800 | 10 | Public Lake (Experimental) |
| | | Lake St. John | 200 | 20 | Public Lake (Experimental) |
| | Caldwell | Beouf WMA | 2,200 | 20 | Experimental Lottery Harvest |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 16,100 | 180 | |
| Lake Charles | Evangeline | Chicot Lake | 1,625 | 16 | State Parks (Experimental Harvest) |
| | Vernon | Anacoco Lake | 1,000 | 5 | Public Lake(Experimental Harvest) |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 2,625 | 21 | |

**2006 NON-MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY ZONE AND PARISH
LAKE REGION**

| ZONE | PARISH | HABITAT | ACRES OF HABITAT | TAG ALLOTMENT | REMARKS |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Opelousas | Avoyelles | Grassy Lake WMA | 1,000 | 25 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| | | Spring Bayou | 5,000 | 65 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| | | WMA Pomme-de-Terre | 800 | 6 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| Opelousas | Assumption | Elm Hall WMA | 2,843 | 14 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| | St. Martin | Atchafalaya NWR Bayou des Ourse Brake | 1,300 | 10 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| | Iberville | Atchafalaya NWR Bayou des Glaise Brake | 2,000 | 20 | Highest Bidder Basis |
| | Iberville/ St. Martin | Sherburne WMA | 11,780 | 10 | Highest Bidder Basis (Basin) |
| SUB TOTAL | | | 24,723 | 150 | |
| LAKE REGION TOTALS | | | 63,303 | 476 | Experimental Harvests |

**2006 NON-MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY ZONE AND PARISH
CYPRESS-TUPELO SWAMP REGION**

| ZONE | PARISH | ACRES OF HABITAT | TAG ALLOTMENT | ACRES/TAG | REMARKS |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|------------|---|
| Opelousas | Iberville | 29,880 | 157 | 190 | Tag allotment based upon review of prior years harvest statistics, night counts and alligator model. |
| | Lafayette | 1,200 | 6 | 190 | |
| | Pointe Coupee | 1,000 | 5 | 190 | |
| | W. Baton Rouge | 7,040 | 37 | 190 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | 39,120 | 205 | 190 | |
| Baton Rouge | Ascension | 40,320 | 212 | 190 | Tag allotment based upon review of prior years harvest statistics, night counts and alligator model. |
| | E. Baton Rouge | 2,000 | 11 | 190 | |
| | Livingston | 66,720 | 351 | 190 | |
| | Tangipahoa | 36,181 | 190 | 190 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | 145,221 | 764 | 190 | |
| New Orleans | St. Charles | 39,340 | 207 | 190 | Tag allotment based upon review of prior years harvest statistics, night counts and alligator model. |
| | St. James | 76,960 | 405 | 190 | |
| | St. John | 104,320 | 549 | 190 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | 220,620 | 1,161 | 190 | |
| New Iberia - Bourg | Assumption | 98,560 | 519 | 190 | Tag allotment based upon review of prior years harvests statistics, night counts and alligator model. |
| | Iberia | 31,550 | 166 | 190 | |
| | Lafourche | 112,350 | 591 | 190 | |
| | St. Mary | 60,190 | 317 | 190 | |
| | Terrebonne | 43,014 | 226 | 190 | |
| SUB TOTAL | | 345,664 | 1,819 | 190 | |
| SWAMP TOTAL | | 750,625 | 3,949 | 190 | |

ATCHAFALAYA BASIN ALLIGATOR HABITAT

| REGION | ACREAGE | DESCRIPTION |
|--|---------|--|
| A. Henderson Lake | 15,000 | Bounded on the west by the West Guide Levee, on the North by Little Fardoche Bayou, on the east by the Haha Bay and Gim Slough and on the south by La. Hwy. 3177. |
| B. Crook Chen Cove- Buffalo Cove | 32,000 | Beginning at the northwest corner of Attakapas W.M.A.: A line north along Lake Fausse Point Cut to Bayou Benoit; west to the West Guide Levee, north to the East-West Canal located approximately 3 miles south of Catahoula, La.: East approximately 2 miles to canal; southeast on the same canal to Bayou Crook Chene; east to the main channel of the Atchafalaya River; south to the north boundary of Attakapas W.M.A.; west to point of beginning. |
| C. Spike Bay-Berry Lake | 8,000 | Beginning at a point 1-1/2 miles northwest of Bayou Sorrel Landing; west along canal 5 miles; south along Spike Bay for 2 miles; east to intersect Bayou Sorrel then continue east along Bayou Sorrel to East Guide Levee; north to point of beginning. |
| D. Upper Grand River Flats | 12,000 | Beginning at Upper Grand River Landing; north along East Guide Levee approximately 9 miles to a canal running northwest; northwest along that canal 2-1/2 miles to King's Ditch; south approximately 5 miles to include Billy Little Lakes; southeast approximately 4 miles to intersection of Upper Grand River and Little Tensas Bayou, east along Upper Grand River to point of beginning. |
| E. Bayou Pigeon-Belle River-Flat Lake | 140,000 | Beginning at Bayou Pigeon Landing; south along East Guide Levee to Morgan City (excluding Flat Lake); north-northwest along east side of the main channel of Six Mile Lake approximately 10 miles to 21-Inch Canal; northeast on 21-Inch Canal to Bayou Boutte; north on Bayou Boutte to the east boundary line of Attakapas W.M.A.; then north along its east boundary to Grand Lake; north along the east bank of Grand Lake to Keelboat Pass; northeast along Keelboat Pass and Flat Lake Pass to intersection of Williams Canal and a canal running southwest-northeast; northeast along that canal to intersection of Intracoastal Canal (East Guide Levee); south to Bayou Pigeon Landing. |
| TOTAL ALLIGATOR HABITAT WITHIN BASIN TYPE | 207,000 | Tags may be issued at the rate of one tag per 500 acres of habitat. |

2005 NON-MARSH ALLIGATOR TAG ALLOTMENT BY REGIONS

| REGION | ACRES OF HABITAT | ALLOTMENT | ACRES/TAG | REMARKS |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------|--|
| Lakes | 63,303 | 476 | 100* | Includes public lakes as well as private Cypress-Lake habitat. *Tag allotment may vary depending on alligator populations. |
| Cypress-Tupelo Swamp | 750,625 | 3,949 | 190 | Swamp habitat outside the Atchafalaya Basin. |
| Atchafalaya Basin | 207,000 | 414 | 500 | That portion of the Atchafalaya Basin determined to be Cypress-Tupelo swamp containing permanent water as determine by aerial observations as well as approximately 400 miles of travel by boat during April-June, 1985. |
| GRAND TOTAL | 1,020,928 | 4,839 | | |

*Additionally: Any private lake region or coastal marsh alligator habitat determined by Department personnel to have a reproducing population may be issued tags at the rate of one tag per 100 acres of habitat; exceptionally dense alligator populations on a localized area may be issued tags at the rate of 1 tag per 50 acres of habitat (requires coordination and annual evaluation with Fur and Refuge Division personnel).

Approved by:



Dwight Landreneau, Secretary
La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries

7/19/06
DATE